

Applicant: Jyrki Savela
Application No.: 09/932,214
Art Unit: 1731

23. (New) A device for use in connection with a fabric, having a cross machine width, in a former or a press section of a paper machine, the device comprising a subassembly accomplishing a guiding function of the fabric and the device further comprising at least one subassembly which performs a spreading function across the entire cross machine width and a cleaning function of the fabric and wherein the subassemblies form a single device.

24. (New) The device of claim 23 wherein the cleaning function is performed by a subassembly including a suction unit having a suction slot, and wherein end seals of the suction slot are based on an adjustable overlapping joint.

Remarks

Claims 2-24 remain pending in the application, new claims 22-24 have been added and claim 1 has been cancelled. In the Office Action dated October 4, 2002, claims 2-21 were rejected under 35 USC section 112 second paragraph as being indefinite. Claims 1, 2 and 18 were rejected under 35 USC section 102 (b) as anticipated or in the alternative under 35 USC section 103 (a) as obvious over *Poulsen* and *Lapeyrouse* '109 or '415. Claims 1-4, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 USC section 102 (b) as anticipated by or in the alternative, under 35 USC section 103 (a) as obvious over, FI 3345/68. Claims 1-21 were rejected under 35 USC section 103 (a) as being unpatentable over FI 3345/6, as necessary with *Sweet* and/or *Heymanns* and or *Snellman et al.*

Allowable subject matter was indicated in the combination of claims 13, 14, 16 and 7, provided the combination of claims met the requirements of section 112.

In the claims applicants sets forth a guiding function, an automatic guide, or a means for guiding the fabric; which is understood by those skilled in the art to mean a device at least one end of which can be moved in the machine direction to guide the fabric to the correct location in the cross machine direction. Attached are copies of the following patents: US 5,500,090; US 3,841,722; US 4,932,578 and US 3,750,920 which describe conventional devices for guiding of a fabric at a correct location in the cross direction of the machine. These patents illustrate how the

Applicant: Jyrki Savela
Application No.: 09/932,214
Art Unit: 1731

person of ordinary skill would understand applicants claim limitations directed to guiding the fabric. With the meaning of the claim terms thus explained, it can be seen that the claims can no longer be interpreted as reading on every device over which a fabric runs.

Claim 2 has been amended and claims 22 and 23 have been added so that each possibility in original claim 2 is contained in a separate claim with all elements positively recited. Claims originally dependent on claim 2 have been amended to depend on claims 22, or 23 as appropriate to remove the indefiniteness pointed out by the Examiner. Claim 7 has been amended to set forth the function of the automatic guide and how it relates to the device as suggested by the Examiner.

With respect to the prior art applied, *Poulsen* relates to a device for cleaning a fabric and this device also provides a spreading function. The contact surface is provided with ribs and the ribs are directed towards the edges of the fabric to produce a spreading effect. However, the device guiding a fabric according to the reference is a completely separate guide roll (Fig. 1, roll 24).

Lapeyrouse '415 teaches cleaning a fabric by means of a sucking device. Spreading can also be considered known from this reference because it describes positively crowned rolls and, in addition, the matter is clear from the passage referred to by the Examiner in the specification. This arrangement does not include a guiding function.

Lapeyrouse '109 teaches cleaning a fabric by a sucking device and the spreading effect can perhaps be considered known from this reference because some of the rolls appear to be positively crowned. But no guiding function is shown in the device.

FI 3345/68 relates to a felt conditioning device. The device taught by the reference traverses in the cross direction of the machine. The device comprises rollers provided with ribs, whose function is to stretch the felt to enhance cleaning and to return the felt to a non-stretched state immediately after cleaning. Thus, the felt is stretched by means of the device locally but the felt cannot be spread by means of it across the entire width of the felt. In order that the device might function as a spreading means, it should extend across the entire width of the machine. (This explanation of the Finnish reference is based on input supplied by the Owner's Finnish agents. Note a translation of claim 1 of the Finnish reference which has been provided is

Applicant: Jyrki Savela
Application No.: 09/932,214
Art Unit: 1731

consistent with the device of the reference moving transversely and covering only a portion of the machine felt.)

Claims 2 and 23 include or have been amended to include a limitation that the subassembly performs a spreading function across the entire cross machine width. *FI 3345/68* does not teach a device performing a spreading function across the entire machine width. The device of *FI 3345/68* extends only across a part of the width of the fabric and it is moved in the cross direction of the web. This reference thus does not teach any guiding or spreading function. Only a cleaning effect can be produced by means of the *FI 3345/68* device.

Claim 13 has been amended to include a limitation to an automatic guide which has linear guides and a movement base. When the automatic guide is understood (as understood by those skilled in the art) to mean: to include a device, at least one end of which can be moved in the machine direction to guide the fabric to the correct location in the cross machine direction, claim 13 distinguishes over the art of record.

Claim 18 has not been amended but with the clarification of how a person of ordinary skill in the art would interpret "a means for guiding the fabric," which is further limited by the structures disclosed in the application and the equivalents thereof under section 112 paragraph 6, it is now apparent how claim 18 distinguishes over the prior art.

Papermaking is a relatively mature art and yet the art of record does not show a unitary device combining the functions of guiding and cleaning, or guiding and spreading (of the entire fabric in the cross machine direction), as those terms are understood in view of the specification, this response, and the knowledge of the person of ordinary skill in the art. The invention must be considered as a whole, and it is not proper to pick and choose features of the prior art using applicant's disclosure as a blueprint.

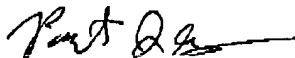
The Examiner has noted on the office action summary that a certified copy of the PCT priority application has not been received. PCT Special Programs Examiner Paul Bell, (703) 308-3543 at the PCT Help Desk indicated that a certified copy of the PCT priority document is not required in a bypass application. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned if further action with respect to the PCT priority application is required.

Applicant: Jyrki Savela
Application No.: 09/932,214
Art Unit: 1731

Applicant believes that no new matter has been added by this amendment.

Applicant submits that the claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance. Favorable action thereon is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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App. No.: 09/932,214 Art Unit: 1731
For: Device for Use in Connection Examiner: K. Hastings
with a Fabric in a Paper Machine

Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

Amendments to the Claims, under 37 C.F.R. § 1.121 (c)(1)(ii)

Please cancel claim 1.

Please amend the claims as follows:

2. (Amended) A device for use in connection with a fabric, having a cross machine width, in a former or a press section of a paper machine, the device comprising a subassembly accomplishing a guiding function of the fabric and the device further comprising at least one subassembly which performs a spreading function across the entire cross machine width [and/or a cleaning function] of the fabric and wherein the subassemblies form a single device.

3. (Amended) The device of claim [2] 23 wherein the subassembly accomplishing the guiding comprises [device subassemblies comprise]:
an automatic guide and a guide roll for guiding the fabric; and
the at least one subassembly which performs a spreading function and a cleaning function of the fabric comprises a curved spreader roll for spreading the fabric, and
a suction unit for cleaning the fabric.

4. (Amended) The device of claim [2] 22 wherein the cleaning function is performed by a subassembly including a suction unit having a suction slot which can be adjusted and wherein the suction slot is formed between two suction ribs.

7. (Amended) The device of claim 2 further comprising an automatic guide for guiding the fabric having linear guides, a worm gear, a trapezoid-thread screw, and a movement base arranged to provide automatic guidance.

12. (Amended) The device of claim [2] 22 wherein the cleaning function is performed by a subassembly including a suction unit having a suction slot, and wherein end seals of the suction slot are based on an adjustable overlapping joint.

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App. No.: 09/932,214

Art Unit: 1731

Page 2 of 2

13. (Amended) A device for use in connection with a fabric in a former or a press section of a paper machine, the device comprising:

- a suction unit part having portions defining a suction chamber;
- at least one suction pipe extending from the suction chamber;
- a first bendable rib and a second bendable rib connected to the suction unit part to define a slot therebetween in communication with the suction chamber;
- a spreader roll mounted to the suction unit part upstream of the slot, the spreader roll having a plurality of rollers adjustable to be curved; [and]
- a guide roll mounted to the suction unit part downstream of the slot, wherein the device is positioned such that the fabric passes over the spreader roll, across the first rib, the slot, and the second rib, and across the guide roll, and wherein the suction unit, the spreader roll and the guide roll form a single device incorporating an automatic guide for guiding the fabric having linear guides, and a movement base arranged to provide automatic guidance of the fabric.

Please add the following new claims:

22. (New) A device for use in connection with a fabric in a former or a press section of a paper machine, the device comprising a subassembly accomplishing a guiding function of the fabric and the device further comprising at least one subassembly which performs a cleaning function of the fabric and wherein the subassemblies form a single device.

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24. (New) The device of claim 23 wherein the cleaning function is performed by a subassembly including a suction unit having a suction slot, and wherein end seals of the suction slot are based on an adjustable overlapping joint.